



WASATCH  
COMMUNITY  
GARDENS

# 2014 ANNUAL REPORT



## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

2014 marked the 25th anniversary of this beloved organization, whose vision is an inclusive and vibrant community that is nourished by healthy and affordable food. What started as a project of Crossroads Urban Center in the mid-1980s is now serving nearly 10,000 community members through our four core programs each year.

I write this on a warm January day with no snow on the ground and bulbs starting to spring up already! I've always thought of our work at Wasatch Community Gardens (WCG) as being primarily about building community and a love of healthy food. However, these temperatures make it clear how much every one of us must consider climate change in all of our activities, including our food choices. With the average meal now travelling over 1,500 miles from farm to belly, making conscious food choices can have a positive impact not only on individual and community health, but also planetary health.

Luckily, community, school, and backyard gardens are increasing in interest nationally and locally here in Utah. As the green pundits often say, food is the gateway drug to sustainability, and really, what better way is there to connect with people than through breaking bread together? With WCG's 25 years of experience working to empower people of all ages and incomes to grow and eat healthy, organic, local food, we've watched more than a few groups of people connect magically through community gardening and scrumptious, healthy food.

And so, it is with great pride that I share with you WCG's report to the community, which demonstrates that 2014 was another year of steady growth for the organization.

Our 2014 highlights included working with several dedicated community members to open our newest garden, Popperton Plots, in the Avenues neighborhood of Salt Lake City. This amazing group of people has been

dreaming of starting a community garden for many years. Through WCG's partnership with Salt Lake City (called the "Green City Growers Program"), a thriving, beautiful, and productive space is now producing food and building community with the best view of a vibrant metropolis from a community garden that we've ever seen. This garden is a great new addition to our City, thanks to the strong leadership for local food currently in City Hall.

Another significant initiative in 2014 was the launch of our new School Garden Program in partnership with the Salt Lake City School District. Thanks to the support of the Salt Lake Education Foundation and several other local foundations, WCG was able to hire a full-time School Garden Coordinator to work with the nine existing elementary school gardens in the district. Through this program, we are offering vital support and expertise to these projects and initiating conversations to work towards a permanent program for supporting school gardens in our city, county, and state.

Finally, we began our capital campaign for creating the exciting new CityGarden, our urban agriculture hub. Over \$200,000 has been pledged for what will assuredly be a dynamic new space for our community that accentuates the importance of local food. With more and more people living in our dense urban core, it's imperative to bring urban agriculture and local food to this diverse and increasing population. We're looking for property in 2015 with our sights on the west side of Salt Lake City.

Throughout all of our programs in 2014, we have continued working to reach more members of our community and increasing our staff capacity to connect with the myriad of cultures in Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County. Our priorities in 2015-16 are to build new partnerships and strengthen our impact by increasing ethnic and racial diversity in our programs, working in food deserts, prioritizing low-income populations, and focusing on

areas with negative health indicators. Our new Westside Garden Project, in cooperation with the Sorenson Unity Center, is an important step towards collaborating more intimately with that neighborhood of Salt Lake City.

At WCG, we look forward to continuing to join together with community members to bring more healthy food to more people in Salt Lake County far into the future. We are grateful to our founders at Crossroads Urban Center; their vision and pioneering work was far ahead of its time, and the continued support of our community will ensure that we continue to provide land and education for our neighbors to grow and eat fresh food for the next 25 years.

Ashley Patterson  
Executive Director

"Working with [Wasatch Community Gardens] really helped me to realize how important it is to know where our food is coming from and how great it is to grow your own!"

—Casey Trout, Fall 2014 Intern

"We are very excited about the vision for the future CityGarden and the additional impact and need it will fill in our community. We are proud to be a part of it and hope others will join in supporting this wonderful effort."

—Ellen Rossi, Trustee, JoAnne L. Shrontz Family Foundation



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## MISSION

The mission of Wasatch Community Gardens is to empower people of all ages and incomes to grow and eat healthy, organic, local food.

Grow. Eat. Repeat.

## ABOUT US

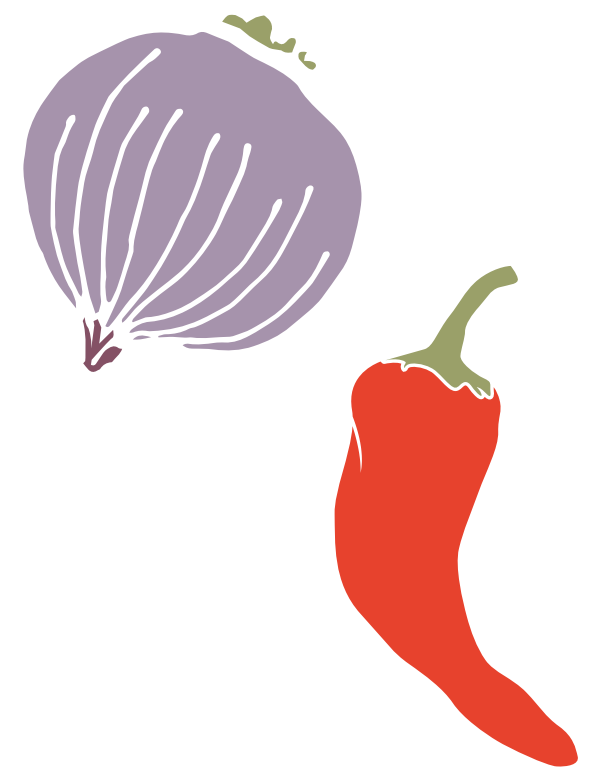
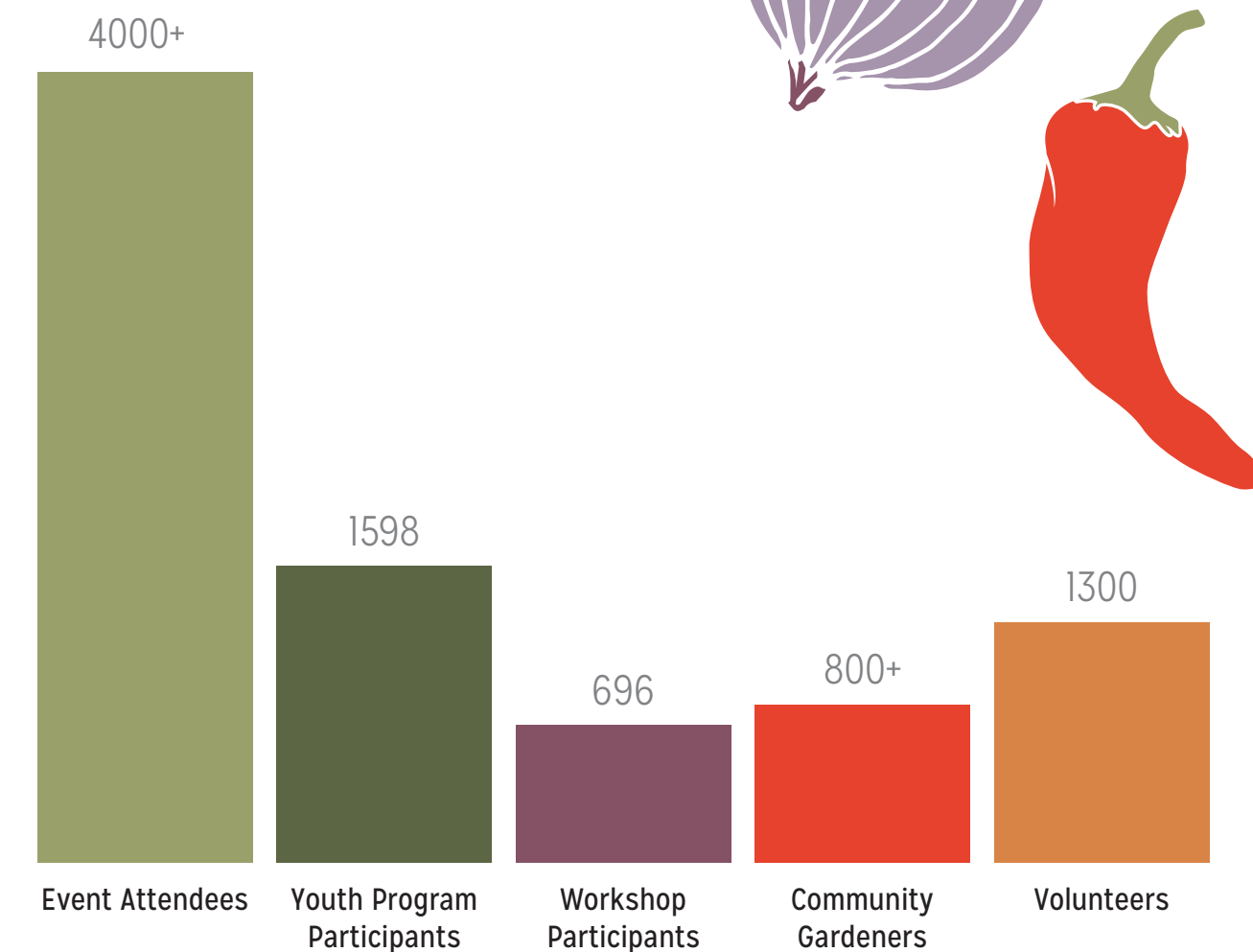
Wasatch Community Gardens has served Wasatch Front residents since 1989 with the belief that the quality of a community is directly related to the quality of its food.

WCG offers a spectrum of dynamic programs for youth and adults aimed at improving access to healthy, fresh food. We provide garden space where community members can grow their own organic produce, as well as educational workshops and community events to empower them to successfully grow, harvest, preserve, and prepare seasonal foods.

Volunteer support is critical to all of our programs. In 2014, volunteers contributed more than 12,200 hours helping with our events, office tasks, and garden projects.



## WHO WE SERVE





# PROGRAMS



## COMMUNITY GARDENING PROGRAM

WCG offers community members the opportunity to grow their own fresh, organic produce by providing garden space, resources, administrative assistance, and education. WCG oversees twelve community gardens throughout the Salt Lake Valley, and nearly 60% of gardeners in our gardens qualify as low-income. This includes gardens created through our Green City Growers and Parks for Produce programs – innovative partnerships with Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County to provide residents with access to community gardens on City- and County-owned land. We also assist community groups and schools with starting and sustaining their own community gardens through our Community Gardens Network and “Growing Community Gardens” workshop series.

## YOUTH GARDENING PROGRAM

WCG encourages youth to make healthier food choices and become more physically active by teaching them hands-on gardening, nutrition, and food preparation skills. The participants represent a diverse cross section of Salt Lake County residents with a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, and range in age from 3-18. To execute the program, we collaborate with the Salt Lake City School District, local nonprofits, and social service agencies that serve low-income youth, such as Boys & Girls Clubs and YouthCity.

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM

WCG provides a range of classes and hands-on workshops, as well as print and online educational resources, to help community members grow, preserve, and eat healthy, organic food. Workshop topics include organic gardening, composting, chicken keeping, beekeeping, and seasonal cooking.

WCG also hosts a number of community events throughout the year aimed at educating Salt Lake County residents about gardening and living sustainably while providing the opportunity to build community and celebrate fresh, local food. Annual events include the spring Plant Sale, Urban Garden and Farm Week, Eat Local Week (in partnership with Slow Food Utah and the Downtown Farmers Market), Tomato Days Dine-Around, and Tomato Sandwich Party.

## 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Provided opportunities for 1,598 youth to learn about growing and eating healthy food.

## 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Enabled more than 800 individuals, groups, or families – including 66 refugee families – to grow their own organic produce in a community garden in our Network. Gardeners harvested over 40,000 pounds of fresh, organic produce.
- Helped start four new community gardens and supported an additional 22 existing community gardens – including five school gardens – through our Network.
- Distributed \$12,525 to 10 community and school garden projects through our Mini-Grants Program.

- Served 578 youth through our City Roots after-school and summer classes – 86% came from households with extremely low, very low, or moderately low incomes as defined by Federal guidelines.
- Served 352 youth through our Growing Greens field trip program – 77% were from Title I schools.
- Served 140 youth through our City Sprouts summer camps – 17% received a scholarship.
- Harvested 4,850 pounds of produce from our youth gardens. The produce was used in our programs, sent home with youth participants to share with their families, and donated to local food pantries to help reduce hunger and improve access to healthy, organic food in Salt Lake County.

## 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Offered 50 gardening and sustainable food workshops attended by 696 community members – of which 35% received a scholarship.
- Served over 4,000 people through our community events.
- Celebrated our 25th Anniversary with a free event attended by more than 400 community members and supporters.
- Served over 700 organic tomato and pesto sandwiches at our annual Tomato Sandwich Party.

## SCHOOL GARDEN PROGRAM

Increased interest in creating gardens in schools inspired WCG to start a formalized School Garden Program in partnership with the Salt Lake City School District. In August 2014, WCG hired a full-time School Garden Coordinator to lead the program. In its first year, the program is supporting existing school gardens in nine elementary schools in the district (including five Title I schools) and helping teachers integrate the garden into their curriculums. The program is working to engage students, administrators, parents, and volunteers in participating in the garden projects.

Over the long-term, the program will assess the specific needs required to sustain school gardens in elementary schools in the district.

## 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Partnered with nine school garden projects to facilitate more than 1,300 students gaining exposure to their school's garden.
- Surveyed existing school garden projects in the Salt Lake City School District to determine current usage and barriers to usage.
- Worked with schools to host informal garden club meetings with teachers to start building support for the garden projects.
- Recruited volunteers to assist with garden projects, including putting gardens to bed for the winter.

“It was one of the best experiences I have had and the people in my patch taught me so much. I now have a house and we have dedicated most of our backyard to a vegetable and fruit garden that we harvest and [preserve] every season.”

—Andre Van Diggelen, former community gardener

“These tomatoes are like garden candy!”

—Xavi, age 5, City Sprouts Participant

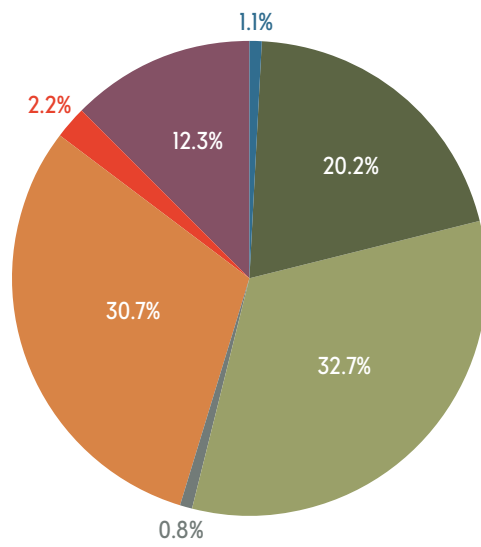
“Just thinking about the spring Plant Sale makes my fingers tingle. Can't wait to restart my veggie garden with Wasatch Community Gardens' help!”

—Instagram user

“WCG has been an invaluable partner from the inception of our school garden. They've supported our garden, formally and informally, to develop in ways that are sustainable and inclusive.”

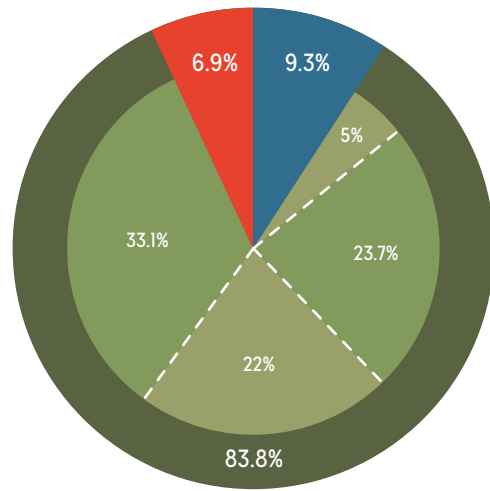
—Annika Jones, Lincoln Community Learning Garden

# REVENUE



Investment Income	\$7,662
Individual	\$144,995
Program Services	\$234,561
Fundraisers	\$5,580
Grants	\$220,038
Sponsorships	\$16,250
In-kind Donations	\$88,590
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$717,676</b>

# EXPENSES



School Gardening Program	\$33,729
Community Education Program	\$158,713
Youth Gardening Program	\$146,951
Community Gardening Program	\$221,250
<b>Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$560,643</b>
<b>Administrative Expenses</b>	<b>\$46,369</b>
<b>Fundraising Expenses</b>	<b>\$62,123</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$669,136</b>

# STAFF



Ashley Patterson Executive Director	Michelle Peacock Thompson Office Manager	Mike Lynch Community Education Program Director	Susan Finlayson Community Gardens Program Director
Bill Stadwiser Youth Program Director	Emma Kroon Van Diest Youth Educator	Felecia Maxfield-Barrett Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator	Giles Larsen Parks for Produce Community Garden Coordinator
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